COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

RECORD

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New Provincial Investment in Capital, Research and Student Assistance

The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) welcomed the 2000 Ontario Budget, which provided new, targeted investments in research, capital and student assistance.

Dr. Paul Davenport, Chair of COU, and the President of The University of Western Ontario, reacted positively to the new research initiatives announced in the Budget, which included an expansion of the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund, a tripling of the Ontario Innovation Trust, doubling of the Premier's Research Excellence Awards, and a new Ontario Research Performance Fund to defray the overhead costs associated with Ontario-financed research.

"The Government is building on its exceptional record of investment in research over the past three years," said Dr. Davenport. "The research initiatives announced in the Budget are good news for Ontario universities, and reflect the priorities that universities and government identified collaboratively through the Working Group on University Research."

"The Province is expanding some very successful programs, while recognizing the overhead costs associated with university-based research," said Dr. Davenport. "Ontario universities join with Finance Minister Eves in calling upon the federal government to follow Ontario's lead and likewise cover the indirect costs associated with federally-sponsored research."

"The Government has also provided significant new resources for the SuperBuild program. The addition of $586 million will help colleges and universities build new classrooms and labs, while upgrading existing facilities. This expansion of physical capacity will further help universities prepare for the huge demand pressures expected over this decade," said Dr. Davenport.

"Although the Budget does not commit further operating funds for enrolment expansion and quality enhancement, universities understand that constructing new facilities constitutes a significant first step toward an overall plan for dealing with increased future enrolments. We look forward to continuing to work with the Government to complete and implement this plan."

Dr. Ian Clark, President of the Council of Ontario Universities, spoke of the Budget's measures to aid of students and improved tax treatment of donations.

"The Government has tabled an array of initiatives that will help students. The improved income exemptions will allow students to keep more of the money they earn. The greater number and higher value of the Ontario Graduate Scholarships along with the expansion of the Ontario Work Study Program will help students meet their education costs," said Dr. Clark. "The new Educational Technology Tax Incentive should help colleges and universities acquire more advanced teaching equipment and learning technologies and improve the educational experience of students."

Ontario universities mourn passing of David Smith

The Ontario university community is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of David Frederick Smith after a brief illness.

Dr. Smith served as Queen's Principal and Vice-Chancellor from 1984 to 1994. He was later appointed interim President and Vice-Chancellor of Brock University from July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998. In recent years, he has continued to work on behalf of higher education as an advisor to the governments of Canada, the government of Ontario and the Council of Ontario Universities.

"This is a great loss to Queen's and to all those who understand the immense contribution David Smith has made to education in Ontario and beyond," says Queen's Principal Dr. William Leggett. "We will never forget how wisely and creatively he met the considerable challenges he faced as Queen's principal during a time of both social change and financial constraint. We will also forever value the many superb programs now in place as a result of his commitment to excellence and rigour."

Dr. Smith, born in India, held earned degrees from McMaster, Oxford and Harvard and honorary degrees from Queen's University at Kingston, the Queen's University of Belfast and McMaster University. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and a member of the Order of Canada. In 1992, he was elected first to chair the Council of Ontario Universities.

Just weeks ago, two major reports prepared by Dr. Smith for the Council of Ontario Universities were released. One addressed issues related to demand and supply conditions for university faculty in Ontario and the other examined methods for improving quality in universities.

The Council of Ontario Universities has created the David C. Smith Award to memorialize Dr. Smith and his many distinguished contributions to leadership and policy in the education in Canada.

2000 Ontario Budget Highlights

Capital

- 1999-2000 capital expenditures to total $1.928 million
- $286 million over 1999 Ontario Budget allocation of $742 million
  - $231 million in new capital projects
  - $55 million in a "modernization fund" — distribution will based on 1998-99 FTE enrolment

Research

- Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund doubled to $100 million for 2000-01
- $30 million annual Research Performance Fund to support research overhead costs from Ontario-sponsored research at colleges, universities and research institutes
- expansion of Ontario Innovation Trust by $500 million to $750 million
- Premier's Research Excellence Awards doubled to $10 million for remaining 7 years of program

Student Assistance

- increase in exemptions for study-period employment and scholarship income
- Ontario Work-Study Program doubled to $10.8 million
- increase in number and value of Ontario Graduate Scholarships

Council releases Smith reports on quality and faculty recruitment

The Council of Ontario Universities has released two reports authored by Dr. David Smith, a respected economist, former Principal of Queen's University and former Chair of the government-appointed Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education. The first report "Will there be enough excellent profs?" examines the prospective demand and supply conditions for university faculty in Ontario. The second report "How will I know if there is quality?" reviews the issues and experiences with quality indicators and quality enhancement programs within Ontario universities and those of other jurisdictions.

These reports are intended to complement "Will there be room for me?" a 1999 report, by PricewaterhouseCoopers, that was also commissioned by Council. The report projected that demand for university opportunity could expand by up to 80,000 places by the end of this decade.

Dr. Smith wrote that if the challenge of the next decade is met, "Ontario will emerge from the coming decade with an even stronger complement of teachers and researchers in its universities and with a more commanding position of leadership in national and international dimensions of the modern knowledge intensive society. If the opportunity is missed, Ontario will find itself a decade from now with a serious deficiency in the number and quality of its university faculty and weakened in its ability to compete nationally and internationally in knowledge-intensive activities."

Dr. Paul Davenport, Chair of COU and President of The University of Western Ontario spoke about the importance of these two reports. "In his reports, Dr. Smith notes that Ontario universities are at a critical juncture in their history as they face the challenges of accommodating a large surge in enrolment, finding and funding first-rate faculty who will be needed to teach the increased number of students and replace an unusually large wave of anticipated retirements, while fulfilling their basic responsibilities to students and society at large."

Editor's Note: As reported on *page 1*, Dr. Smith passed away recently following a brief illness. He will be greatly missed.

OCGS-NAGS conference on graduate education well attended

The Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) and the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools (NAGS) co-hosted a conference, "The Future of Graduate Education," on April 13 - 15, 2000. NAGS is one of the four regional affiliate organizations of the Council of Graduate Schools in Washington D.C., encompassing universities in Eastern Canada and the northeastern quarter of the United States.

The joint OCGS-NAGS conference was planned to address similarities and differences in the approaches of Canadian and U.S. institutions to major issues confronting graduate education. Each session – on topics ranging from enhancing access to graduate education for minorities and students from deprived economic backgrounds, to intellectual property, graduate studies and research, to research and professional ethics – included presentations from both Canadian and American panelists. Participants included an equal number of Canadian and American graduate deans and administrators, university faculty and graduate students, and representatives from granting councils and other organizations concerned with graduate education.

Awards were presented to students for the outstanding master's thesis and doctoral dissertation and faculty for outstanding graduate teaching and graduate mentoring. Of special note, Dr. Jules LaPalme, who has served for 16 years as President of the Council of Graduate Schools and who delivered the keynote address on "Continuity and Change in Graduate Education," was honoured with an award for his support of graduate education.

At a reception sponsored by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Tina Molinari, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister, acknowledged the importance the government attaches to graduate education. She also singled out the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies for the significant role it plays, particularly in its appraisal of the quality of graduate programs.

OSAP default rates falling

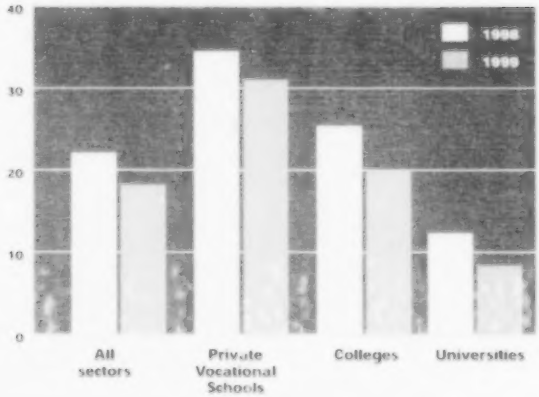
The number of students defaulting on the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) has declined almost four percentage points over last year, but there is still more work to be done, says Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. The overall default rate at colleges, universities and private vocational schools was 18.2 per cent in 1999, down from 22.1 per cent in 1998.

"It's encouraging that more students are paying back their loans, but default rates are still too high," said Cunningham in a ministry statement. "More can and must be done. Most students do repay their loans and it's not fair to them or to the taxpayers who are funding the system when other students default."

The decline in rates demonstrates progress in meeting a government goal set in 1998 to reduce overall OSAP default rates to less than 10 per cent by 2003.

The default rate has declined across the system. The rate for university students is 8.4 per cent, down from 12.3 per cent and already below the 10 per cent program goal; the rate for college students is 20.1 per cent, down from 25.4 per cent; and the rate for students of private vocational schools is 31 per cent, down from 34.5 per cent.

OSAP Default Rates 1998 and 1999



Operating grants and tuition fee policy announced for 2000-2001

On March 14, 2000, Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, announced that operating grants for universities for the academic year 2000-2001 would increase by $51.8 million to a total of $1.663 billion.

The funding will be divided as follows:

- $18.8 million is earmarked for previously announced scheduled commitments including Access to Opportunities Program and Fair Funding to universities.
- Accessibility Fund – $16.5 million in new funding, and
- Performance Indicators Fund – $16.5 million in new funding distributed on the basis of institutional performance in three indicators (graduation rate, six month employment rate and two year employment rate).

The Minister also announced a new tuition fee policy, from 2000-2001 to 2004-2005, that will allow universities to increase tuition fees for most programs to a level no more than 2% above the maximum average fee for the previous year. Year over year per cent age increases may not be compounded.

"COU expressed its disappointment with the announcement on operating grant allocations and the new tuition fee policy, stating in its press release, "The funding does not respond to the enrolment growth in universities in recent years nor to the need to prepare for the significant increase in demand for access that will accompany the double cohort and the echo of the baby boom. The five-year announcement on tuition reduces the flexibility that our institutions have to react to changing demands and to ensuring markets receive the quality education they deserve."

Report on Learning Technologies Released

The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) has released "A Time to Seize" the report of COU's Task Force on Learning Technologies.

The rapid emergence of information and telecommunications technologies is transforming the way organizations are doing business. To help respond to these challenges, the Task Force was created to examine opportunities and barriers, and ultimately to make recommendations to facilitate the more effective use of these technological resources. The report identified strategic planning, the creation of a more supportive environment for the use of these technologies and significant investment from governments, the private sector and universities as crucial to address the potential of learning technologies within Ontario universities.

The Task Force was chaired by David Johnston, President of the University of Waterloo, who is internationally recognized for his expertise in the field of learning technologies. The membership of the committee included representatives from government, the communications and information technology sector, and universities. This initiative demonstrated the value of working in partnership to achieve major issues.

Prof. Johnston spoke of why he thinks the work of the Task Force is important. "Learning technologies are those information and communication technology tools that provide increased opportunities for interaction with learning materials and among learners, as designed and guided by university faculty. Used effectively, they can enhance the quality of student learning and improve access by allowing students to pursue learning opportunities in their own time and place.

"While there have been significant advancements in information and telecommunications technology in recent times, the full introduction of these new technologies has met with mixed reactions on Ontario university campuses. Enthusiasm continues to build as opportunities for enhancing teaching and learning are discovered, but is often dampened by the existence of many barriers to implementation," said Prof. Johnston.

Prof. Johnston noted the urgency of the Task Force's recommendations. "Ontario universities are on the verge of a generation change in student demand is projected to grow by 40% over the next decade. At the same time, the need to recruit faculty is becoming acute owing to retirements and projected enrollment growth. Given these pressures, there is a narrow window of opportunity to make decisions for the use and support of learning technologies to aid in the effectiveness and reputation of Ontario universities."

Representatives from Ontario universities will be meeting in Toronto in early June to begin a dialogue about the report and its recommendations.

Chancellors and high-tech CEOs voice support of the liberal arts

The chancellors of Ontario universities gathered in early 2000 to share their views and experiences, reflect on common concerns, and express pride in the institutions of which they are the titular heads and confidence in the administrations that run them. They also discussed future opportunities for Ontario and the challenges that these opportunities present.

The chancellors – distinguished professionals from a wide ranging backgrounds – stressed that the liberal arts and sciences must continue to be a seminal part of Ontario's higher education. They cited a number of recent studies that have clearly underlined that a well rounded, general education is as valuable to future employability as technical or technological training.

Leaders of some of Canada's major high technology companies also lent their voice to support. "We stand with the chancellors of Ontario universities, who recently stated that funding must permit universities to manage enrolment demand and maintain a diverse and forward-looking curriculum." The presidents and CEOs stated that, while they have a need for technology graduates, they have "an equally strong need for those who can work in tandem with technical specialists, helping create and manage the corporate environment." This diverse group recognizes the necessity for a balanced approach to education and readily acknowledges that, in order for their businesses to prosper, "we need creative thinkers at all levels of the enterprise."

Government announces expansion of degree-granting institutions and applied degrees for colleges

The Government of Ontario has decided that the introduction of private universities and applied degrees are appropriate means of expanding opportunities for students to pursue postsecondary studies in this province. Through the establishment of a Quality Assessment Board and the stated intention to develop a Student Protection Plan, it has also acknowledged the importance of ensuring quality and protecting the scholastic and financial interests of students.

Dr. Ian Clark, President of COU, stated that: "The number one priority for Ontario universities is the continued quality of the educational experience, for which Ontario universities are internationally recognized."

COU's ongoing analysis of issues related to quality has been recently informed by the commissioned work of Dr. David Smith, former Principal of Queen's University, and former Chair of the government appointed Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education. Dr. Smith's report "How will I know if there is quality?" reviews the issues and experiences of quality indicators and quality enhancement programs within Ontario universities and those of other jurisdictions to promote effective and efficient means to enhance quality.

New COU publication introduced

The Knowledge Track is a new COU publication designed to provide timely information to university bound students and their families. The reforms that have been undertaken in Ontario secondary schools are creating many questions for families and Ontario universities want to assist in responding to these questions wherever possible.

The first edition of *The Knowledge Track* was sent to Ontario high schools in early June 2000. It is also available on the COU website (www.cou.on.ca).

Because the issues surrounding secondary school reform and its implementation continue to evolve, *The Knowledge Track* will be published from time to time to augment its readers with important developments as they occur.

Funding for collaborative nursing programs set out

On April 13, 2000, Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, and Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, announced funding for the establishment of collaborative nursing programs and a change in the Registered Nurse (RN) entry to practice regulation. The funding announcement was set out as follows:

- A one-time grant of $10 million for 2000-2001 flowing to the colleges that will equal approximately $3,000 per first year student.
- Start up/expansion grants of $12.6 million over seven years beginning 2001-2002.
- $5.6 million in college faculty upgrading grants to enable up to 170 college faculty to earn Master of Science Degrees in Nursing.
- $2.1 million to offset college faculty tuition fees for those faculty members who are working on Master of Science Degrees in Nursing; and
- $4.9 million in faculty renewal grants to expand graduate programs (in response to concerns about the anticipated retirement of nursing faculty in the near future) for up to 140 RNs who wish to become nursing educators.

The entry to practice regulation has been passed, which means individuals seeking registration as a RN will require a baccalaureate degree in nursing effective January 1, 2005. The Council of Ontario University Programs in Nursing supports the preparation of RNs at the baccalaureate level and is studying the funding implications of the announcement.

Reunion at 250th meeting of Council

Many former chairs of Council returned for the 250th meeting of Council held on April 27, 2000. They are pictured standing with current chair Paul Davenport.

Chairs standing, left to right: Ronald Watts (1979-81), George Connell (1981-83), Dr. Davenport, David Smith (1992-94), Harry Arthurs (1967-69), Alvin Lee (1983-85), Robert Prichard (1991-96), Alan Earp (1985-87). The Ontario university community was deeply saddened by the passing of Dr. David Smith. Please see story on pg. 3.

Former presidents of Council also attended the meeting and are pictured seated with current president Ian Clark.

Seated, left to right: Edward Monahan, Dr. Clark, Peter George. Missing from the photo is Bonnie Patterson.

Survey results show 96.4% employment rate among 1997 graduates

The 1999-2000 Ontario University Graduate Survey found that 93.1% of 1997 university graduates were employed within six months of graduation and that employment rate climbed to 96.4% two years after graduation.

Dr. Paul Davenport, Chair, Council of Ontario Universities, and President of The University of Western Ontario was delighted by the results. "It's great to have yet another confirmation that our graduates are doing so well in the job market. These results show that the success rate is distributed across the full range of disciplines taught at our universities."

Commenting on the release of the 1999-2000 Ontario University Graduate Survey results, Hon. Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, said: "Clearly a university education is preparing young people for ongoing success in the workforce."

"Publicizing the experiences of university graduates gives prospective students the information they need to make informed choices for the future," said Cunningham. "This information release is timely given that students will soon be making admission choices for this coming fall."

The survey was conducted by the Ontario Universities' Application Centre on behalf of the Council of Ontario Universities under a contract with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. This is the second annual survey to be conducted.

More than 19,614 graduates completed the survey, which also queried graduates about earnings and how the skills graduates acquired during their studies are being applied to the workplace. On May 8, 2000, all Ontario universities made survey results and other information about their institution publicly available through their institutions' web sites.

A brochure highlighting the survey's findings is available on the COU web site:
http://www.cou.on.ca

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Update on secondary school curriculum

The Ministry of Education intends to release soon the policy documents that detail the content of the new Grade 11 and Grade 12 courses. When that material is available, the member institutions of COU will be able to establish specific requirements for admission to the institutions and to its programs. The information will be inserted by January or February 2001 to enable students to select courses that will provide entry to the university programs of their choice.

The release of the Grade 11 and 12 course material will initiate the next phase of COU's involvement with the secondary school curriculum. Some issues, notably questions related to student evaluation and the reporting of student grades, need to be discussed and clarified. COU is working with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities on a plan, modelled on the Curriculum Validation Process, intended to engage academics in the implementation and evaluation of the new courses and in a projected quality assurance program that would subject the new curriculum to a periodic review cycle.

Editor's Note: Details on the new curriculum were released on June 2, 2000, and are available on the Ministry of Education website (www.edu.gov.on.ca).

Application Centre prepares for the anticipated double cohort

The Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) will face the challenge of the heightened demands of the application processing one year before the anticipated double cohort of high school graduates begin arriving on university campuses. As early as the 2001-2002 cycle, the Centre expects that not only will the number of applicants expand but also the number of multiple applications to institutions or programs, in light of the increased competition for university admission.

Permitting applicants to amend their program selections over the web will reduce some of the anticipated increased workload, but the task ahead remains daunting. However, Executive Director Greg Marcotte is confident that, with the careful planning currently underway, the Centre will be able to maintain a high level of efficiency in its operations regardless of the increase in the number of applications.

OPAS Visionary Seminar features Royal Bank CEO

On January 25, 2000, the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS) hosted its fourth Visionary Seminar featuring John Cleghorn, Chair and CEO of Royal Bank. Mr. Cleghorn presented his vision of the future of the financial services industry, with particular focus on the significant role that universities play in providing innovative research and Royal Bank's role in providing venture capital and financial expertise to bring ideas to fruition.

This year's Visionary Seminar, held at Wilfrid Laurier University and broadcast live by satellite feed, drew a total of more than two thousand participants – students, faculty and local business leaders – from 15 Ontario universities as well as participants from universities in British Columbia, Alberta and Nova Scotia. In addition to the 400 attendees on site at Laurier, many university partners hosted audiences of more than 100 at their respective institutions.

A complete report of Mr. Cleghorn's speech is available in the Partnerships Program section of the OPAS web site (www.opas.on.ca).